

THE AMERICAN ROLE

benefited if its able and conscientious personnel had been supplemented by a few experts exclusively devoted to service in this part of the world. In this connection, British experience might have provided a good pattern to follow.

To sum up our observations on the American role and attitudes during the war, we may say that, although correct and honorable, the United States' policy toward Iran did not manifest the same degree of foresight, firmness, and consistency that was characteristic of the Soviet policy and to a lesser extent of the British. Had the United States made its stand quite clear on several issues, not only through occasional pronouncements, such as the Teheran Declaration or the statement during the oil crisis, but in active day-to-day diplomacy, it could have prevented many unwelcome events. The rather passive character of American policy eventually encouraged unilateral Soviet action, since the Russians were led to believe that the only real opposition to their schemes would come from war-weaned Britain. One may say that in Iran the typical drama of American world policy was reconstructed in miniature: first, a basic reluctance to visualize the future and to get involved in foreign complications; then as a result of this attitude the nondeliberate encouragement of potential aggressors; and, finally, a sharp awakening and a realization that the time had come to act. Meanwhile, due to procrastination the danger had become more serious, and the effort required to combat it more strenuous.

